

# Saturday Magazine.

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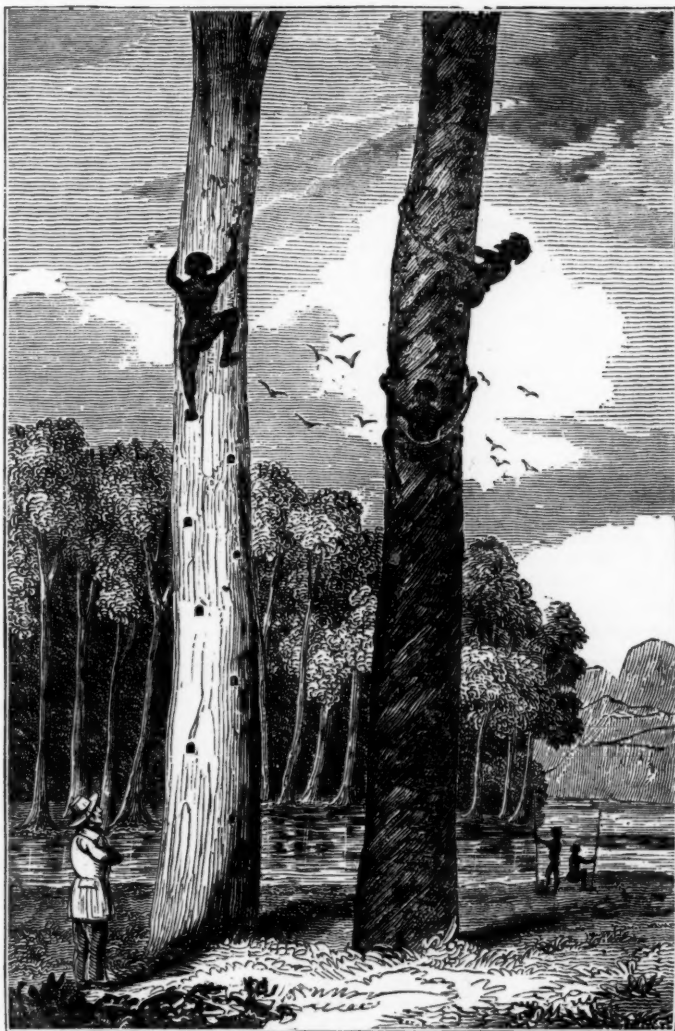
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UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE COMMITTEE OF GENERAL LITERATURE AND EDUCATION  
APPOINTED BY THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

## SKETCHES OF NEW SOUTH WALES. No. VII



NATIVES ASCENDING LOFTY TREES

CURIOUS INTERVIEWS WITH THE NATIVES—THEIR LANGUAGE—CAPACITIES OF THE PEOPLE—JOURNEY THROUGH THE FOREST—METHOD OF CLIMBING—OF TAKING WILD ANIMALS—BEES AND HONEY.

SEVERAL of the natives visited our tents during our stay in Argyle County. On one occasion, as a party of them advanced, two large kangaroo-dogs attacked them, but they coolly placed themselves in attitude, (as if to throw,) with their searching eyes fixed on the dogs, which, although viciously inclined, turned back with a growl, and then the blacks fearlessly, but cautiously, approached. There was nothing in the encampment that escaped their notice, nor aught but what they had something to talk about. The tents,

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muskets, pistols, camp-table, stools, stretcher, dray, bullocks, horses, spaniels, tether-ropes, frying-pans, kettles, tin-pots, and knives and forks, were all, one after another, observed and remarked upon.

I happened to be shaving in my tent at the time of their arrival, an operation which I could with difficulty get through, for two or three of the blacks kept peeping in at me, and ludicrously made their remarks on the process. As soon as I had finished, however, the looking-glass was handed to them, and nothing could exceed the wonder which they expressed, nor the merriment it occasioned, as each beheld his face reflected; one looked grave and stared, another appeared ashamed, while others kept grinning as they

took a peep, putting out their tongues, and making ridiculous grimaces. They then looked at one another, and made their remarks with a volubility of speech, which, from our ignorance of their language, was of course entirely lost to us.

It is certainly to be regretted, that even now so very little of the language of the natives of Australia is known to us, and that no pains have ever been taken to obtain, as far as possible, a correct knowledge of it\*. We see them with our eyes, and, consequently, can describe their outward appearance, and by observing attentively the actions and customs of a people, we may be enabled to give a tolerably interesting, though, it must be allowed, but a very defective account of them. But, from our ignorance of their language, we are incapable of describing their feelings, or giving proper reasons for their actions, and the means by which their passions have been excited; and it is chiefly owing to this ignorance, also, that we have been unable and incompetent to ameliorate their condition. The extent of our powers of conversation with these blacks, has generally been no more than a vocabulary of a few words, and a stupid collection of sentences intermingled with bad English; and though, as I have before observed, they acquire with greater facility the means of conversing with us, I cannot believe that it is possible for us, without first being thoroughly acquainted with their own language, to impress them with a correct understanding of the sense which our words are intended to convey.

It is impossible to say what their notions of religion, or of supernatural powers are, but a belief in the existence of some superior agency must necessarily excite, to a certain extent, the minds of the most uncultivated of mankind. The "observation of the various striking natural phenomena, such as the revolutions of the sun, the moon, and the stars, the thunder and lightning, storms and hurricanes," cannot fail to impress all savages with wonder and terror; so that the religion of these blacks, as well as of other barbarous tribes, can only be termed a 'religion of nature,' consisting in a mysterious fear of such visitations, and attributing them to unknown spirits, and the like. They appear, however, to have no outward form of worship, although it is possible they may entertain notions of good or ill fortune from certain ominous appearances.

I have been informed, by very good authority, that there is in each tribe one who possesses a peculiar influence over the rest, from some unaccountable talent or cunning, and who is always applied to in cases of illness or disaster, where it is supposed that no merely human remedy can avail. The bleeding of their gums, by drawing strings through them, is one of his superstitious and magical practices, and this is supposed always to be attended with mysterious effects. But in whatever their religion may consist, or whatever ideas they may have of an hereafter, it is most probable that they are as simple as they may be absurd.

To return, however, from this digression, after their merriment had somewhat abated, and their curiosity been satisfied, one of the blacks was asked if he would like to be shaved, and with a little hesitation he consented, and submitted to the operation with great patience, although his companions and the tonsor himself kept up a continual giggle the whole time. A basin of water, soap, and towel, were then brought to him, and he commenced washing his face and hands; but when he took the towel, and removed

it after wiping himself, the poor fellow looked truly ridiculous at observing the white towel besmeared with the dirt from his face and hands. I cannot say whether he expected to have become a white man after the shaving, but he certainly appeared very much chagrined and disappointed upon re-viewing himself in the looking-glass. Another consented to have his hair cut, which was also performed, and these circumstances impressed me with the idea of the confidence which they placed in us. They were then shown one or two landscape-drawings, and sketches of dogs, trees, kangaroos, &c., which they immediately recognised and understood. I also showed them a drawing of a black man, which had been taken by a gentleman some time before, and I certainly was astonished when they mentioned, from the likeness, the name of the individual whom the sketch represented. As I knew that the blacks had never seen these drawings (if any) before, their perception and power of distinguishing them, were to me decided and convincing proofs that they were not only not deficient in the natural powers of the human intellect, but on the contrary, that they possessed a very great share of intelligence.

Being anxious to become acquainted with their methods of hunting and procuring food, as well as to witness their dexterity in the use of their weapons, I again accompanied them to their gunyas, and taking a gun and a couple of dogs, we set out for a morning's sport.

It may here be observed as a peculiar characteristic of the blacks, that whenever they wander from one place to another, their eyes are continually on the look out, sometimes directed to the ground, then to the tops of the trees, and again to the trunks of them, so that, as they walk, they are constantly stopping to examine this, that, or the other. We had not left the tents many minutes, when I perceived one of them cutting away with his tomahawk into the bark of a tree, from which he soon extracted about seven or eight grubs, thick, fat, yellow insects, which he put into his mouth, head, legs, and all, one after another, and pronounced them, tapping his chest, *Capital!*

Another black was seen pointing with his finger to the fresh marks of an opossum that had ascended the tree in the night to take shelter in a hole during the day, upon which he exclaimed, as he looked upward, in as much of English as he was master of, *Me megalitz*, (Me see him); *Me pi him cobbera directkaly*, (Me strike him on the head directly); and he forthwith commenced climbing the tree.

Their method of climbing trees is very singular, and the facility, fearlessness, and dexterity with which they do so, are well worthy of being noticed. The sketch shows the two different ways of ascending, the one with the tomahawk, and the other by the assistance of the vine, which is used as a rope or hoop. The former method is *most generally practised*, and appears to the spectator to be attended with danger. The black, having eyed well the inclination of the tree, commences by cutting a notch just large enough to admit his great toe. The height of this notch from the ground is about two feet and a half, although it generally depends upon the individual; for it is a remarkable fact that two blacks will not ascend by each other's notches or steps, even though the tree has been climbed by several of them. He then cuts another notch from two to three feet higher for his left foot; and when this is done, he fixes his tomahawk as high as he can reach into the tree, and holding by it, ascends the two first notches. His left great toe being in the second cut, he stands support-

\* See an account of the attempt to form an Australian Grammar in the *Saturday Magazine*, Vol. VIII., p. 6.

ing his whole weight upon it, with his left arm round the tree, and then makes two more notches as before. In this manner I have seen them get up trees of immense bulk, and rising from forty to fifty feet without a branch, with as much confidence and celerity as a European mounts a ladder.

The other mode, with the vine, is also extraordinary, and can, of course, only be practised by the natives of the country where the vine is prevalent. This method, as described to me, is as follows:—The black, having cut a rope of vine of proper length and strength, according to the magnitude of the tree, first encircles the trunk with it, and fastens the two ends in a knot. He then places himself within the hoop of the vine, and raising it with both his hands, leans back with all his power, as if to prove the strength of the vine, as well as the certainty of the knot. These precautions being taken, he makes a spring, raising, at the same time, the hoop higher than himself. In this inclined posture the body is wholly supported by the vine, and as he springs again, he raises himself with his feet and hands, and making similar jumps, he ascends with surprising velocity.

I had an opportunity of witnessing the actions and manœuvres of a black in ascending a tree after an opossum by the former method, which were highly amusing. Having, by the assistance of his tomahawk, reached the hole where the animal was supposed to be, he made signs to those below, as he thrust the handle of the tomahawk into the hollow of the tree, that he was not deceived, and began cutting away with great earnestness, then, feeling again, he exclaimed, "Look out massa; me pi him directly." So, indeed, it happened, for the opossum, after another cut or two, darted out, and at the instant received a blow from the tomahawk which sent him to the ground dead. Several opossums were killed in a similar manner by others of the natives.

As we proceeded, I observed another digging away at the trunk of a rotten tree, from which he soon brought to light a nest of small ants of a brown colour, which were completely covered with little white eggs of an oval shape. As soon as he had dug them out in a mass, the black procured a piece of bark, which he cut from an elbow of a gum-tree, and which, when removed, formed an oblong concave vessel, in which the nest of ants, with their eggs, were placed, and conveyed to their encampment. I inquired what they were going to do with them? They replied, "Budgerry patta," (Good food). Another black was soon observed watching very attentively the top branches of a tree,—I asked, what he was looking at? "Me megalet budgerry honey," (I see good honey!). "You see," said he, pointing upwards to the place. I gazed upwards for some time, but could perceive nothing but the leaves and branches, and it was not until he had ascended the tree, and showed me the hole, that I discovered numerous little flies pouring in and out the hollow of a branch, which, after examining for a short time, he cut down. As soon as it fell I was curious to know where the honey was, as I could perceive nothing but thousands of these little insects swarming out of the branch, (they much resembled our common fly, but were rather smaller). My curiosity, however, was soon satisfied, when the black commenced opening carefully, with his tomahawk, the hollowed limb, when, having split through nearly four feet, a complete honey-comb was exposed. The substance of the comb was of a coarse waxy material, and of a dark-brown colour. It was fashioned into innumerable apartments, or cells, which appeared to be similarly

constructed, and designed to answer the same purpose as those in our common bee-hives.

These cells were filled with transparent and amber-coloured honey, which also, in taste and appearance, exactly resembled the honey of the common bee, and was equally sweet and delicious. These Australian bees (if I may so call them), are perfectly harmless,—not armed with a sting, but are very small and black, and, as I have before mentioned, more resemble our common fly than any other insect I could compare them with. It would be a subject of very interesting inquiry for a competent person to examine into the nature of them, and show in what respects these insects, which are so different in their formation and size from the ordinary bee, are provided with materials and power to effect the same purpose. The honey-comb, when extracted, was placed in a sheet of bark similar to that in which the nest of ants was deposited, and carried away.

As we went along, a kangaroo-rat ran out of his nest, which they build on the ground, of dry grass and hair; but as he hopped along with incredible swiftness, a blow from a tomahawk, thrown by a youth, put a stop to his progress. These little animals are the kangaroo in miniature,—their head, legs, and tails are similar, and they hop in the same manner, though from their colour and diminutive size they bear a resemblance to the rat. They are about the weight of a guinea-pig. Another of the natives knocked down a Bandacoot, an animal which burrows in the ground, and is not unlike the rabbit. Its size is about the same, and its flesh, when cooked, is white and very eatable. Thus, in the lapse of only two hours, having walked leisurely about a couple of miles, I saw them collect opossums, kangaroo-rats, a bandacoot, grubs, ants' eggs, and honey, without much trouble and exertion; and, they not only excited my surprise by their activity, but afforded me great amusement, by the droll and humorous way they have when engaged in any employment.

We had now arrived at their encampment, but, with the exception of one or two old men and women, with their children, the gunyas were deserted. The rest had also gone to procure food. I observed a black approaching towards us walking very lame,—he had lacerated his leg near the instep with a splinter, and when he was sat down, I offered to send for some plaster for him, telling him it would soon heal the wound. He did not understand me, and proceeded to use his own remedy. He had brought with him a small piece of bark, which contained some red gum, with which almost all the species of the eucalyptus abounds, and with this he besmeared the part injured, and stuck a leaf upon it, saying, it would be soon "budgerry," or well. This gum is very bitter to the taste, and of the consistency of glue; it is always used by them, in cases of wounds, as a salve, and I have no doubt it possesses a very healing quality.

Presently, a dozen or more boys made their appearance, carrying reeds of about seven or eight feet in length, which, as soon as they arrived at the fires, they commenced fashioning into spears.

W. R. G.

SOLOMON and Job judged the best and spoke the truest of human misery; the former the most happy, the latter the most unfortunate of mankind; the one acquainted by long experience with the vanity of pleasure, the other with the reality of affliction and pain.—PASCAL.

THE most important principle, perhaps, in life, is to have a pursuit,—a useful one if possible, and, at all events, an innocent one.—SIR H. DAVY.



## THE COMMON FOXGLOVE.

THE COMMON FOXGLOVE, (*Digitalis purpurea*.)

"The partial Foxglove, that hangs its blossoms all on one side," is a beautiful ornament to our hedges and coppices, and from its elegant form it has latterly been introduced into our gardens. The root of the Foxglove is biennial, that is, it dies away after two years. It has long been a famous remedy in many diseases, and it is equally famed for the dangerous effects which have arisen from its incautious use; in general it appears to be more dangerous to men of a strong constitution than to the more delicate and weakly.

The whole plant, when bruised, has a bitter, nauseous, and virulent flavour. It is used in medicine generally in the form of a tincture, and possesses a very singular property, namely, that of suddenly reducing the pulse, which, in many disorders, is absolutely necessary for the safety of the patient, but, unfortunately, its powers are so irregular, that it requires the constant vigilance of the medical attendant.

The deleterious effects of this plant are not confined to the human species; M. Salerne, a physician at Orléans, having heard that several turkey-poults had been killed by being fed with Foxglove-leaves instead of Mullein, gave some of the same leaves to a large and vigorous turkey. The bird was so much affected that he could not stand upon his legs,—he appeared, as it were, drunk; good nourishment, however, restored him in a few days. The same experiment was tried on another turkey, who was fed on the leaves for four days; it then refused to touch them, and although every care was taken, it died at the end

of eight days. On opening its body, the heart, the lungs, the liver, and the gall-bladder, were found shrivelled and nearly dry.

The only ground upon which experiments of this kind, which inflict pain upon an helpless animal, ought ever to be referred to, is for the purpose of preventing a repetition of uncalled-for cruelty, by putting upon record the results already obtained.

The directions given for gathering the leaves of the Foxglove for medical purposes, are to collect them on a hot dry day, when the petals fall, and the seed-vessels begin to swell. The leaves are afterwards dried as quickly as possible, but not in the sun, then bruised and put into bottles very closely corked.

## THE LAKE OF KILLARNEY.

I GOT up very early, not a little pleased to find that I was about to realize a vision of many years' date, and revel in Nature's loveliest haunts, among woods and water-falls, glens, passes, and mountain heights. "This, then, is KILLARNEY," I said, as I surveyed the noble expanse of water, with its wooded islets, and richly-studded banks, and cloud-capt hills in the distance. Time was when my heart would have bounded at the sight, and broken out into raptures of enthusiastic ecstasy: now it sunk within me, and I was silent: I remembered Loch Katrine and Ben Venue, the Island, and "the Trosach's wildest nook." I remembered my then feelings as if it were yesterday, though fifteen years had elapsed. The same external objects, the same beauties, the same glories, now surrounded me: but O! how altered were my feelings. Yet why give vent to my disappointment? Am I singular? Is it not the same with all? The toys of childhood once cried for, soon cease to interest; the feelings of youth are swallowed up in the business of manhood, or blunted by its cares; and the very thoughts which now distract our peace, yield to the pressure of time, till time itself merges in eternity. How will our retrospect then affect us? is the great question.

I was roused from my melancholy reverie by the garrulity of my steersman and bugler. We had passed over the large lake, and he would soon show me the spot which Sir Walter Scott admired most when he was here. How much more sublime is man than inanimate nature! How superior his power! The mere mention of the bard gave a local habitation and a name to beauties which, without some mental and special associations, were lost in their immensity.

"Were you here with Scott?" I exclaimed. "Yes, please your honour, the whole of one blessed day, and he talked a deal to me." I had scarcely observed the man before: he now rose wonderfully in my estimation: indeed, I felt a kind of respect for him; and his bugle sounded more harmoniously after he told me that Sir Walter had commended it. I think he found out my weakness, and, to flatter it, romanced as fast and as copiously as his hero had done. I eagerly swallowed all he told me, just as a child listens to fairy tales, and cried out, "More, more!" Whether he spoke from memory, or from the rich stores of his own imagination, his tongue never flagged until we reached the spot, which, according to him, Sir Walter had admired most of any. Beautiful it was, most beautiful! But I no longer admired the landscape with vague admiration; I quite loved it; and, as long as I live, I shall remember as classic ground the spot where he had stood. I passed an hour among the arbutuses,—not shrubs, as in our gardens, but large as cedar-trees, and loaded with golden fruit.

[Unpublished Journal of a Tour in Ireland.]

## NEWSPAPER LITERATURE. No. V.

BEFORE we enter into the details of an English Newspaper of the present day, it may, perhaps, prove amusing to take a slight glance at the actual state of journalism in foreign countries.

We have already adverted to the occasion of the establishment of newspapers in France; and from that period until the Revolution, publications of this nature were so completely controlled or guided by the government, that nothing worthy of observation appears in the monotonous character they present. During the fearful scenes of the Revolution, they were little more than echoes of the sanguinary denunciations of those ferocious ruffians, who for a time triumphed over every principle of right and justice. While the power of Napoleon lasted, the French journals were principally conspicuous for their slavish adulation of the emperor, and for being the ready instruments in forwarding his ambitious designs at the expense of truth and good faith. Upon the restoration of the Bourbons, several of the leading Parisian journals were taken into the pay of ministers, who, indeed, frequently penned the editorial articles which appeared in them. We are told that the royal newspapers cost the government 5,000,000 of francs annually. The part which the newspaper-press of Paris bore in the "three glorious days," is so fresh in the memory of every one, as to render recapitulation unnecessary. The number of journals published in the French metropolis immediately before this revolution, was seventeen political, and one hundred and fifty-two of a literary, scientific, or religious character. The number of provincial journals was between seventy and eighty. The present state of the French press is an anomaly only to be explained by the unstable nature of the French character. The same people who drove a monarch from his throne for attempting to circumscribe the liberty of political discussion, within five years after patiently submit to enactments which, if rigorously acted upon (as appears to be the determination of those in authority), must end in the absolute suppression of all such discussion. By the recent law, the proprietor or editor of a French newspaper is compelled to deposit a sum of money equal in amount to the *maximum* penalty to which he may become liable; nor can his journal reappear, subsequent to a conviction, until this cautionary deposit is restored to its original amount. Imprisonment for various terms is added in *all* cases of infringement of the law referred to; and at this moment, several of the conductors of the French journals are pursuing their avocations within the walls of a dungeon!

In the Peninsula, from the superstitions and ignorance of the great bulk of the people, the public journals have been, hitherto, little more than registers of the "pomp and circumstance" of religious observances, or the vehicles for state-announcements. Since the revolutions in that part of Europe, indeed, an attempt has been made to extend periodical publications; but the principles of true liberty seem to be so imperfectly understood, and the character of these productions has been so extremely unstable, that little real progress has been observable. In the few additional journals that have maintained their existence in Portugal since the expulsion of Miguel, we look in vain for tolerant or comprehensive views: in political matters, they are evidently as completely under the will of the existing government, as were their predecessors. In Spain, the first proclamation of liberal principles, upon the accession of Isabella, ushered into existence many additional newspapers; but of these no less than twenty-one disappeared

within a few months, in consequence of the restrictive measures which the government found it necessary to adopt towards them. At the commencement of the present civil war, the whole kingdom possessed seventy-seven political journals, of which number fifty-four bore an official character, and were, therefore, merely government manifestoes.

In Italy, whether the portion under the dominion of its own petty princes, or those parts subject to Austria, the press is so completely subjected to the censorship, that newspapers can only be regarded as a medium for keeping up a literary intercourse between contiguous nations. The same remark (with a few trifling exceptions) will apply to Germany; where, however, it may be noticed, that some of the communications from the East, which appear in their journals (particularly in the Prussian), and also their articles of literary criticism, and on scientific subjects, are highly interesting, and frequently of an important character. Among other singular regulations for the press which the government of Prussia have lately made, we learn that an ordinance was promulgated in the month of December, 1835, providing that every person who would obtain permission to edit a journal in Prussia, must have acquired an academical degree.

In Holland and Belgium the state of the newspaper press approximates to that in our own country.

In Switzerland twenty-four political periodicals appear each week,—nine of which are edited by Romanists, and fifteen by Protestants.

The empire of Russia, despotic as its government undoubtedly is, has, nevertheless, upwards of eighty periodical journals published within its boundary. The earliest of these was commenced in 1703, during the reign of Peter the First. The leading Russian newspaper is entitled *The Bee of the North*, and is published in the metropolis three times a week; besides this, two or three journals in the French language are published at St. Petersburg; all, however, under the strictest *surveillance* of a censorship.

Greece has several newspapers; but, owing to the violence of party dissensions in that distracted country, they are continually disappearing, and their place is as rapidly supplied by others. True freedom of opinion can be but little appreciated in a country where the rude and uncultivated state of the population almost prevent the extension of the forms of civilized government.

But the most singular proof of the march of intellect (or innovation on ancient prejudices) in these days, is to be found in the fact, that a newspaper has recently been established in the capital of the Ottoman empire; and that its prosperity is an object of much solicitude with the reigning Sultan. For the introduction of this improvement (as for many others), the Turks are indebted to the enterprise of a Frenchman; indeed, the Moslem journal is printed both in the Turkish and French languages. Many particulars of interest are transferred to its columns from the European newspapers; although no inconsiderable portion of it is frequently devoted to the detail of Mohammedan rites and ceremonies.

In the vast regions of Hindostan several journals in the native dialects have appeared within the last few years; and, without doubt, owe their origin to the pious labours of Christian missionaries, who have imparted a spirit of inquiry to the half-civilized natives. Even the jealous vigilance of the Celestial Empire has not been able to shut out this "barbarian" feature; and a Canton newspaper has been successfully planted among the Tartars.

In the South Sea Islands, the Christian missionaries have invented an alphabet for the natives, who

had previously no written language; and in order to be intelligible to the infantile minds of those whom they are employed in instructing, the missionaries have recently hit upon the expedient of publishing a narration of events, illustrated by pictures cut in wood, printed at the head of each article: by this means, the attention is more effectually fixed, and the subject rendered more easily intelligible to the demi-savage who is to be made acquainted with it. This curious sheet is now published at regular intervals, and is termed an Owhyhee newspaper.

The native Indians of the New World have imitated the "White man" in this particular; and a printed Cherokee newspaper,—partly in the native dialect, and partly in English,—now instructs the red warrior in the arts of civilization. This paper is called the *Cherokee Phoenix*, and it is conducted entirely by a young Cherokee. It seems it had been surmised that the editor was assisted by a white man; whereupon the following notice was put into the paper:—"No white man has anything to do with the management of our paper. No other person, whether white or red, besides the ostensible editor, has written, from the commencement of the *Phoenix*, half a column of the matter which has appeared under the editorial head." How creditable is this fact to the intellect of the native Indian tribes of America!

In the United States, the extension of the newspaper press, since the separation from the mother country, has been amazing; although we must not overlook the circumstance, that many of the American periodicals are of very doubtful utility, and nearly the whole of them of an extremely humble character. In 1775, the country forming the twenty-four States of the Union, had only thirty-seven newspapers: in 1834, one thousand two hundred and sixty-five! But, as we have above remarked, the character of most of these differs very essentially from that of an English newspaper. One cause of their rapid extension is the absence of all tax upon them; while, at the same time, they can be sent by post to the distance of a hundred miles, for a postage of about one halfpenny. As, however, we purpose to treat of the state of the American newspaper press at some length in a subsequent part of these papers, it will be unnecessary to enter further upon it at present.

Few, if any, of the British colonies are without a newspaper. These are generally published in the English tongue, except in some few instances of colonies ceded by France, and in which they are either wholly or partially printed in the language of that country. In the Ionian Isles they are printed in Greek and Italian,—the opposite columns being duplicates of each other in the two languages. A curious anecdote is on record respecting the slow transmission of news in these islands. It is stated that Cerigo, the most eastern of the islands, formerly had very little communication either with Cerigo, the seat of the government, or with the other islands; and such was the infrequency of it, that the officer commanding a small party there heard of the return of Napoleon, the battle of Waterloo, and the death of the Princess Charlotte, at the same time.

The importance of the mode of communication by newspapers was so strongly felt by the new colonists at Swan River on the western coast of Australia, that until the *matériel* of a printing-establishment could be obtained from England, a *written* newspaper was issued from the seat of government, and copies of it nailed to trees at particular stations in the settlement. In the parent colony, at Van Diemen's Land, one of the journals is published twice a week; and Hobart Town alone supports six newspapers.

[To be Continued.]

### ANECDOTES OF OBERLIN\*.

THE following anecdotes are illustrative of the paternal influence which Oberlin (pastor of Waldbach, in the Ban de la Roche) exercised over his flock, as well as of his readiness to assist those who differed from him in their religious tenets.

A young woman of Schirmeck, of the Roman Catholic persuasion, had married a protestant of Waldbach. This man had enemies: he was, comparatively speaking, rich, and his fortune might possibly have some connexion with the motives of their animosity. The young woman became the mother of a little girl, who, by mutual consent, and in pursuance of the marriage agreement, was to be brought up in the religion of the former, and baptized by the clergyman at Schirmeck. To repair thither it was necessary to take the road over the mountains; but at the moment of their setting off, they were informed that the enemies of the husband had laid a scheme to waylay them at a particular turn of the road, to spring out upon him when he reached it, and to compel him by menaces and ill-treatment to consent to their unjust demands.

Their journey could not very well be delayed, as the priest had been informed of their intended arrival; and yet they were afraid to undertake it on account of the impending danger. In this painful dilemma they went to consult Oberlin. He, after exhorting them to place their trust in God, most kindly offered to accompany them, to render his aid and protection should they require it. On arriving at a spot in the forest where there was reason to fear an ambuscade, Oberlin knelt down, and, extending his hands over the young people, exclaimed with a loud voice, "Great God! Thou seest wickedness lying in wait, and conspiring mischief. Thou seest innocence in alarm. Almighty God! avert the danger, or give thy children strength to surmount it."

At this moment several men who had been concealed behind a thicket of beech-trees discovered themselves and rushed forwards, uttering the most threatening exclamations. Oberlin took the little infant in his arms, and advanced towards them with a calmness which did not conceal his indignation, yet still left room for the hope of pardon. "There," said he to them, "is the babe which has done you so much injury, which disturbs the peace of your days." Dismayed at the presence of their pastor, whom they little expected to meet with in the character of an escort to persons going to perform a Roman Catholic ceremony, and finding from the few words which he had addressed to them, that he was not ignorant of their bad designs, they did not attempt to dissimulate, but, confessing their crime, begged pardon of the young man, and offered terms of reconciliation. Thus providentially rescued from the danger which had threatened them, the young people continued their walk to Schirmeck, while Oberlin returned to Waldbach with the men whom he had thus prevented from doing evil. When they reached the entrance of the village, "My children," said he, as he left them, "remember the day on the mountains, if you wish that I should forget it."

Another morning (in the early part of his ministry) as Oberlin was at work in his study, he heard a great noise in the village. Rushing out, he perceived a foreigner whom almost the whole population were loading with abusive and threatening language. "A Jew! a Jew!" resounded on all sides, as the good pastor forced his way through the crowd; and it was with difficulty that he could obtain silence. As soon, however, as he could make himself heard, he rebuked

\* See *Saturday Magazine*, Vol. III., p. 246.



the people with great warmth for having proved themselves unworthy the name of Christians by treating the unfortunate stranger in so cruel a manner. He added, that if this poor man wanted the *name* of a Christian, they wanted the *spirit* of Christians. The same enlargement of mind distinguished Oberlin on all occasions. And whatever men might say, he still remembered the apostle's injunction, Gal. vi. 10, "Let us do good unto all men."—*Memoirs of Oberlin.*

#### EARTH'S RIVERS.

O'er the green earth unnumber'd rivers glide.—Mrs. HEMANS.

ROLL onward as of old  
Over thy sands of gold  
Thou noblest of earth's mighty mountain-streams;  
Poured from the cloudy urn  
Where skies eternal burn  
Down Andes' pine-clad sides the bright LA PLATA gleams.  
No more the marble halls,  
Nor tower-crowned walls,  
Reflected on thy azure bosom now,  
Nor barge of royalty,  
EUPHRATES; floats on thee,  
All, all are gone, and nought is left but thou!  
GANGES! thy swelling wave  
No more shall be the grave  
Where dying pilgrims fix their hopes of heaven;  
Nor idol-victim now  
Beneath their cars may bow  
For to the dark Hindoo the holy Gospel's given.  
River unknown to song,  
Whose waters roll along  
Through forests where the foot of man ne'er trod;  
The Indian in his bark  
Shoots through thy waters dark  
And on MISSISSIPPI's banks adores his idol-god.  
Loud as the thunders roar  
Thy foaming waters pour  
Their deep tumultuous billows from on high;  
O'er NIAGARA's wall,  
Thy tumbling waters fall,  
In billowy foam, SAINT LAWRENCE, meets the sky.  
No tide of human blood  
Swells thine imperial flood  
Nor mighty triumphs on thee mirror'd shine;  
The mouldering piles which stand  
O TIBER—on thy strand  
Tell of thy glory to remotest time.  
Through Russia's icy plains  
Swoll'n by eternal rains  
The sluggish VOLGA winds its silent way;  
The poor Laplander there,  
Chilled by the nipping air,  
Deep in his snow-home feels no noontide ray.  
River, beyond the rest  
Thou wert supremely blest  
When Zion's King stood on thy pearly bed,  
There did the Saviour stand;  
Poured by the prophet's hand  
Thy simple wave o'er his anointed head.  
And in that hallowed flood  
The proud Assyrian stood,  
And bathed his bosom in thy holy stream;  
There from that crowned head  
Disease and sorrow fled,  
For JORDAN's waters wash'd the leper clean.  
O Saviour! in that tide  
Which from thy pierced side  
On Calvary's mount was poured out like wine;  
Cleanse my polluted soul,  
The wounds of sin make whole,  
And breathe thy Spirit o'er this heart of mine.  
Stonebrakes. W. H. BROWNLEE.

To know our own faults, and not seek to amend them, is, indeed, an unpardonable aggravation of them.—*Memorials of a Departed Friend.*

#### SELF-DISCIPLINE.

It is the character of the Christian religion to inculcate the practice of self-discipline to a much greater extent than was ever thought of before, and the Christian religion is constantly represented by its earliest teachers as holding out perfect freedom to its disciples. It appears to me certain that the practice of its precepts is calculated to ensure the greatest quantity of happiness here as well as hereafter; because, while it permits every rational enjoyment, it imposes restraint only in those things which are injurious. It is not by plunging into extremes that we can ensure our well-being,—for they defeat every object of living,—but it is by a steady temperate course, with a constant check upon ourselves, even at the thought of evil. To make self-discipline effective and permanent, it should be extended to all our actions and habits. We must begin from the present, and go steadily on, watching ourselves unceasingly;—we must never be too sure, but distrust our own strength on every occasion of temptation, either of commission or omission.—ORIGINAL.

ACTION.—Look around you, and you will behold the universe full of active powers. Action is, to speak so, the genius of nature. By motion and exertion, the system of being is preserved in vigour. By its different parts always acting in subordination one to another, the perfection of the whole is carried on. The heavenly bodies perpetually revolve. Day and night incessantly repeat their appointed course. Continual operations are going on in the earth and in the waters. Nothing stands still. All is alive and stirring throughout the universe. In the midst of this animated and busy scene, is man alone to remain idle in his place? Belongs it to him to be the sole inactive and slothful being in the creation, when in so many various ways he might improve his own nature; might advance the glory of the God who made him; and contribute his part in the general good?—BLAIR.

POPE Adrian built a college at Louvain, and caused this inscription to be written, in letters of gold, on the gates thereof: "Utrecht planted me, Louvain watered me, and Cæsar gave me the increase." One, to reprove his folly, wrote underneath, "God did nothing here."—FLAVEL.

#### PORTLAND ISLAND,

ON THE COAST OF DORSETSHIRE.

PORTLAND is a small island, or rather peninsula, situated in the English Channel nearly opposite to Weymouth. It is connected with the main-land by a ridge of pebbles, which extends nearly seventeen miles along the coast, and from which it is separated by a narrow arm of the sea, called the Fleet. Portland Island had been fortified with a castle before the year 1142, as in that year it was taken possession of by Robert, Earl of Gloucester, in the name of the Empress Maud. This is now an inconsiderable ruin, but was formerly of great extent. The present fortress, built by Henry the Eighth, is of great strength, and completely commands Weymouth Road.

Portland Isle extends about four miles and a half in length, and two in breadth; and, in a mineralogical point of view, may be regarded as one continued mass of freestone rock, of which nearly thirty thousand tons have been dug annually. The inhabitants, about three thousand in number, are a rough hardy people: formerly they were famous for slinging stones.

The stone of this island, so famous for its durability and beauty, first came into repute in the reign of James the First, who employed it, by the advice of his architects, in the construction of the Banqueting-house at Whitehall, and it has since been used in the erection of almost all the public edifices of note in the

English metropolis. Westminster-bridge had from hence stones of three, four, and five tons weight each, and stones have been lately dug out of seven tons. In the quarries are found a great variety of petrified shells. From the high land is a beautiful view of Portland Roads, where may often be seen fifty or a hundred sail of vessels waiting for a fair wind, it being the only place of anchorage between Portsmouth and Plymouth, and is one of the best in the kingdom for that purpose; breaches are made in it, and in places nothing is to be seen but a sediment of black marl or clay; but, with a south-westerly wind, immense volumes or beds of pebbles roll towards the shore, cover the beach, fill up the breaches, and gradually form again into a formidable body.

By the tempestuous hurricane of the 23rd of November, 1824, this beach was much reduced. In the morning of that day, when the tide was at its greatest height, the waters of West Bay flowed into Weymouth Roads in an incessant torrent; and a small vessel lying there was washed completely over the beach. The breaches, however, caused by this, the most tremendous storm remembered on that coast, were all completely repaired in a wonderfully short space of time.

The pretty village of Wyke stands just above the ferry, from the main-land to the Pebble Beach. The Church is a handsome building, and forms a landmark a considerable distance out at sea. In the churchyard are many monuments to the unfortunate sufferers who have at various times been lost on the coast.

Many bushels of Hemlock\* are procured in Portland every year; and a plant from which arrow-root is made, and starch extracted, called by the natives, Starch-moor†. The roots are dug up in great quantities, and, when made into powder, many hundred weight are sold at Weymouth for starch, and nourishment for young children and invalids; it is

\* See *Saturday Magazine*, Vol. VII., p. 226.

† *Ibid*, Vol. VI., p. 238.

also used in pastry, soups, puddings, &c. For this useful discovery a woman of Portland received a reward from the Society of Arts.

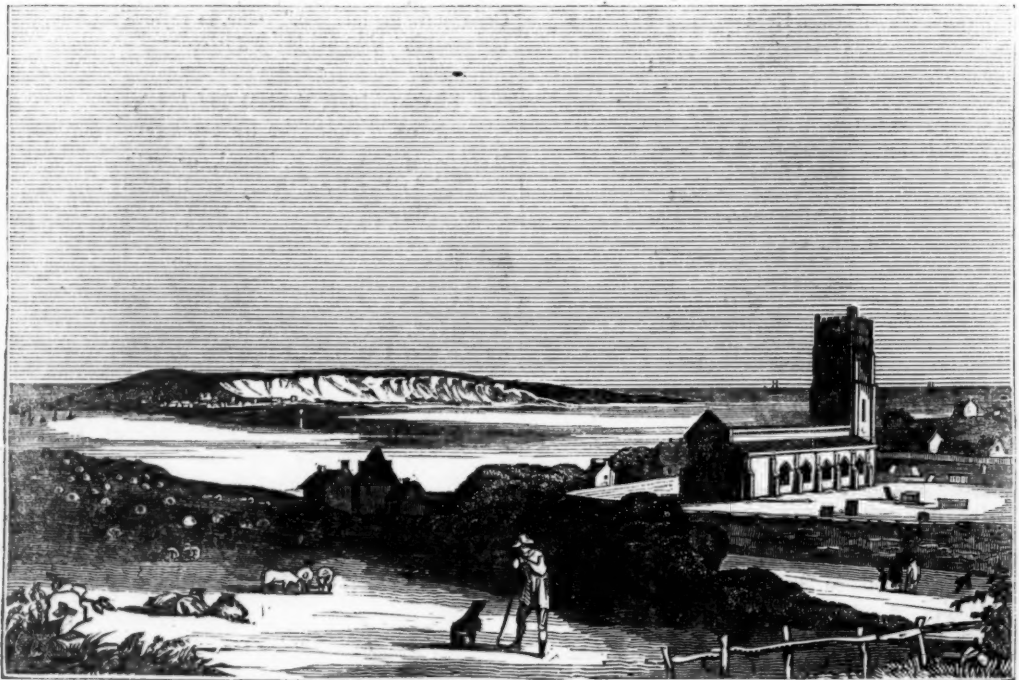
That delicious bird the Wheat-ear is here in great plenty; this little bird, commonly called the English Ortolan, is not bigger than a lark, but preferable in fatness and delicacy.

It has been asserted that the Portlander's nightly wish is

Blow wind; rise sea;  
Ship shore 'fore day!

This may be the case with some of the worst of them. Generally speaking, however, they are always on the alert, and prompt in their exertions to rescue shipwrecked sufferers from a watery grave, even at the most imminent risk to themselves; their deserts in this respect are above all praise, and ought to be well known and duly rewarded.

The Chesil Bank, connected with the main-land, is one of the most extraordinary ridges or shelves of pebbles in Europe, and perhaps the longest, except that of Memel, in Polish Prussia,—and in most places about a quarter of a mile in breadth. The pebbles forming this immense barrier consist chiefly of a white calcareous kind; but there are many of quartz, jasper, &c. They gradually diminish in size from the Portland end of the bank to that which attaches to the main-land, and are throughout so loosely thrown together, that horses' legs sink almost knee-deep at every step. Several ingenious theories have been advanced to account for the formation of this curious work of nature, but they have hitherto been accounted unsatisfactory. The consequence of this self-raised barrier may be imagined when the summit is reached,—it is capable of opposing the most furious tempest, and the neighbouring country probably owes much of its security to this wonderful bulwark. During a storm, the breaking of the sea, and the commotion of the pebbles, form together a magnificent sight and sound. When a north-east wind prevails, the pebbles are washed away.



PORTLAND ISLAND AND WYKE CHURCH.